

## Message Text

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41

ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-01 SP-02 INR-05

NSC-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 L-01 SCA-01 DODE-00 /038 W

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R 160904Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3090

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 3734

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RP

SUBJECT: RECENT ATTACKS AGAINST EMBASSY IN MANILA PRESS

1. EMBASSY AND U.S. IN GENERAL HAVE BEEN UNDER ATTACK BY TIMES JOURNAL SINCE FRIDAY, MARCH 12. ALTHOUGH TWIN ISSUES (VISA CASE AND PX BLACKMARKETING) WOULD HAVE BEEN SELF-GENERATING SENSATIONS IN PRE-MARTIAL LAW DAYS, IMMIGRATION COMMISSIONER REYES TOLD AMBASSADOR SAME EVENING THAT KOKOY ROMUALDEZ HAD ORDERED ATTACKS IN REACTION TO FOX BUTTERFIELD NYT MARCH 2 STORY ON KOKOY AND MRS. MARCOS. (WE HAVE SINCE LEARNED IT WAS FEBRUARY 24.) KOKOY BELIEVED STORY HAD BEEN INSPIRED BY EMBASSY AND HE PLANNED TO CONTINUE PRESS ATTACKS HERE UNTIL EMBASSY LEARNED ITS LESSON.

2. PX BLACK MARKETING STORY FAIRLY ROUTINE. IT LAMBASTS BOTH CLARK AND SUBIC BUT IT HAS GIVEN SOME BALANCE TO ALLEGATIONS AND PRODUCES NO NEW CHARGES; VERSION OF STORY HAS BEEN RUNNING IN OTHER PAPERS FOR SEVERAL WEEKS. VISA CASE, HERALDED AS U.S. VISA MEN "MANHANDLING" RP BEAUTY, IS FAR MORE BIASED AND SENSATIONAL. CASE AROSE FROM VISA APPLICATION OF MISS V. CAMPOS GOMEZ, 22-YEAR OLD DOG HANDLER, ON FEB. 23. APPLICATION INITIALLY GRANTED BUT ALMOST IMMEDIATELY CANCELLED WHEN IT WAS FORTUITOUSLY LEARNED SHE HAD MISREPRESENTED HER MEANS OF SUPPORT. IN  
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ENSUING ALTERCATION, MISS GOMEZ KNEED ONE OF THE VISA

OFFICERS AS SHE WAS BEING ESCORTED FROM THE VISA OFFICE.

3. CINCPACREPPHIL SENT LONG MESSAGE TO CINCPAC REPORTING PX BLACK MARKETING CAMPAIGN IN PRESS AND LOCAL COMMANDERS HAVE DENIED ALLEGATIONS. EMBASSY HAS RECOMMENDED BASES DOWNPLAY AND FURTHER REACTION TO THESE STORIES. IT HAS ALSO PROPOSED DISCUSSION OF BLACKMARKETING AT NEXT MDB COMMITTEE MEETING TO ATTEMPT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PHILIPPINE INITIATIVE TO ACCOMPLISH BETTER COOPERATION ON VEXATIOUS PROBLEM.

4. ON VISA CASE, IN RESPONSE TO LONG AND UNUSUALLY WELL-DRAFTED LETTER DATED FEB 26 FROM MISS GOMEZ TO AMBASSADOR, ACTING CONSULAR HEAD SENT CALM REPLY MAR 8 OUTLINING FACTS. COPIES SENT TO DND SECRETARY ENRILE AND DFA UNDER SECRETARY COLLANGES, CHOSEN INFO ADDRESSEES OF MISS GOMEZ. WHEN STORY BROKE MAR 12 IN TIMES JOURNAL, AMBASSADOR HAD OCCASION TO TELL AMBASSADOR REYES (FROM COLLANTES OFFICE) FACTS OF CASE. THAT SAME EVENING, IMMIGRATION COMMISSIONER REYES TOLD AMBASSADOR TIMES JOURNAL ATTACK ORIGINATED WITH KOKOY ROMUALDEZ. EMBASSY IS HANDLING INQUIRIES ON "NO COMMENT" BASIS. COPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE BEING POUCHED.

5. IN CONVERSATION WITH FONSEC ROMULO MARCH 16, AMBASSADOR GAVE FACTUAL ACCOUNT OF VISA INCIDENT AS WELL AS HIS UNDERSTANDING OF KOKOY'S ROLE. HE LEFT WITH ROMULO COPY OF OFFENDING NY TIMES ARTICLE AND ASSURED HIM THAT HE WAS NOT RPT NOT SOURCE OF ATTACKS AGAINST KOKOY.

6. COMMENT: WE ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE REYES EXPLANATION OF MOTIVATION FOR SUDDEN PRESS ONSLAUGHT IN KOKOY ROMUALDEZ'S PAPER. MARTIAL LAW WOULD PRECLUDE THE EMBASSY EFFECTIVELY SETTING RECORD STRAIGHT, BUT PRESS READERS MAY SMELL SOMETHING FISHY IN ANY EVENT. SULLIVAN

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## Message Attributes

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